

HONORING BENJAMIN MILLER

HON. JARED HUFFMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2020

Mr. HUFFMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of myself and our former House colleague, the great George Miller. Together, we wish to honor Benjamin

(Ben) Miller who served each of us, and our country, with distinction for the past eighteen years. Ben departs the Hill on January 1, 2021 after eight years as my Chief of Staff, and before that a decade in Congressman Miller's office where he worked his way up from intern, to Legislative Assistant, to Legislative Director, to Deputy Chief of Staff. Throughout the Capitol and on both sides of the aisle, Ben has earned the respect, admiration, and affection of his peers. His tenure in the House is the very model of public service.

When I was first elected to Congress in 2012, I sought out Ben knowing that his talents, experience and disposition would make him a great Chief of Staff. He exceeded my highest expectations. He helped me assemble a quality staff team and establish an office culture that reflects a strong work ethic, a fun and collegial environment, and a constant focus on carrying out our progressive policy agenda and getting things done. Ben never sought attention or personal recognition; he just did excellent work, usually behind the scenes.

Like Congressman Miller and myself, Ben shares a passion for the sustainable management of our natural resources. Throughout his career on the Hill, Ben has been a friend to flora and fauna, a champion of bedrock environmental laws like NEPA and the Endangered Species Act, and a happy warrior in defense of our great American outdoors and the people and organizations that passionately work for its protection.

Longtime staffers and outside experts can attest that Ben is a subject matter guru on what is arguably the most intricate, combustible, and Byzantine issue of all: California water. Ben understands that California water conflicts sometimes require you to fight, which is easy enough to do; but he also knows that achieving meaningful, durable results requires you to do the much harder work of engaging constructively and solving complex water problems.

Beyond his policy expertise and legislative acumen, Ben will be remembered fondly by Team Huffman for the human qualities that were hallmarks of his leadership: honesty, professionalism, kindness of spirit, and the good humor he brought to work every day.

Ben is a dedicated husband to Caitlin, and a proud father to Sam and Campbell. For reasons I will never understand, he is also a passionate fan of the San Antonio Spurs, through good times and bad. We forgive him for that.

Madam Speaker, the functioning of our legislative branch which is so vital to our democratic republic has always depended on skilled, dedicated, unheralded congressional staffers. For eighteen years, in the most exemplary manner, Ben has provided that essential public service. He has earned the deep respect of his peers, and my enduring gratitude for being such a wonderful Chief of Staff.

On behalf of myself, Congressman Miller, and dozens of current and former staffers who

were privileged to work with Ben, we thank him for his public service; we thank his family for sharing him with us; and we wish him much success and happiness in his future endeavors.

CELEBRATING IRIS CUMMINGS CRITCHELL'S 100TH BIRTHDAY**HON. JUDY CHU**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2020

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 100th birthday of one of my constituents, Iris Cummings Critchell, a remarkable woman who has led an extraordinary life.

Iris was born on December 21, 1920, in Los Angeles, California. She was a competitive swimmer in her youth and was the U.S. champion in the 200-meter breaststroke from 1936 to 1939. Her hard work and talents led her to represent the United States in the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin. Shortly thereafter, she attended the University of Southern California (USC) and graduated in 1941 with a degree in physical sciences and mathematics.

Interested in aviation from an early age, Iris was accepted into USC's first Civilian Pilot Training Program in 1939. She received her pilot's license in 1940 and began work as a pilot instructor after graduating college. During WWII, Iris joined the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS), which later merged into the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP). She served as a member of the 6th Ferrying Group out of Long Beach, California, ferrying planes built in Southern California across the country. During her service, she flew 27 different types of military aircraft, nearly 30 types of civilian aircraft, and flew 18 military aircraft as the pilot in command. It was during her time in the service that she met her husband and fellow military pilot, Howard Critchell.

After the War, Iris returned to the University of Southern California to develop and teach a curriculum on civilian aviation for returning veterans. In 1962, Iris and Howard joined the faculty of Harvey Mudd College, where they founded the Bates Aeronautics Program, a two-year program to teach undergraduates to fly. She ran the program with Howard until he retired in 1979 and continued alone until the program ended in 1990 with her retirement, although she continued to teach aeronautics classes until 1996.

Among her many honors, Iris was inducted into the National Flight Instructors Hall of Fame in 2000, awarded the Federal Aviation Administration's Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award in 2006, and awarded the Nile Gold Medal of the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale in 2007 for her lifetime of dedication to aviation education.

Although she has been retired for 30 years, Iris continues to be an active member of both the Harvey Mudd College and aviation communities, mentoring students and anyone interested in aviation. She serves as a role model for women aviators and is an inspiration to all with whom she interacts. It is my distinct honor to recognize Iris Cummings Critchell's lifetime service to our country, and I ask my colleagues to join me in sending our best

wishes to her and her family as they celebrate her 100th birthday on December 21st.

IN HONOR OF COLONEL ANDREW "COBY" SHORT**HON. JOHN JOYCE**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2020

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Colonel Andrew "Coby" Short of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania for his service to Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District on the 2020 U.S. Service Academy Nomination Committee.

Nominating exceptional candidates to attend our nation's service academies is one of my most important responsibilities in Congress. During this process, I rely on members of the Service Academy Nomination Committee, which is comprised of dedicated volunteers who have served our nation with distinction.

Colonel Short is one of nine academy alumni who graciously volunteered their time to meet with and evaluate perspective nominees for the Class of 2025. As a graduate of the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York, Colonel Short knows firsthand the qualities and dedication that are critical for succeeding at the academies. He provided wise counsel and expertise throughout the nominating process, and I am grateful for his time and commitment.

Colonel Andrew "Coby" Short is an outstanding Pennsylvanian and American, as well as an excellent role model for future academy students. On behalf of the 13th District of Pennsylvania, it is my honor to recognize Colonel Short for his service to our community and our nation.

MORRIS BROWN COLLEGE**HON. KWANZA HALL**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2020

Mr. HALL. Madam Speaker, To God and Truth.

That is the motto of Morris Brown College. This is a historic institution which was founded in 1881 as a private Methodist college in Atlanta to educate blacks, just 20 years after the start of the Civil War.

Unfortunately, over the last 20 years, the state of this legendary institution has fallen on hard times.

But true to its tradition and the abolitionist mantra to keep going, Morris Brown College has developed a plan to come back and be reborn.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge this body's support for this plan in two distinct ways.

First, we should reallocate federal funding for this place of knowledge and of truth and of God.

And, we should do what we can to reinvest in the revitalization of the Atlanta University Center.

If we do this, then the College can repurpose itself to the proud tradition of teaching the next generation of black scholars the important lessons of business and entrepreneurship.